ABSTRACT

An instrument for retrieving suture within a patient has a shaft with proximal and distal ends. The distal end terminates in an articulating mechanism, such as a jaw that captures suture slidably within an opening disposed toward the instrument tip. An actuating mechanism disposed on a handle proximal to the shaft opens and closes the jaw. The handle is adapted to be gripped in the user's palm, and the actuating mechanism is toggled between two operative positions, preferably by flexion and extension of a single digit. Alternatively, the handle and actuating mechanism have a plier-like configuration, providing a single instrument adaptable to be held by the user in either of a normal position, with the operative tip directed generally away from the user's body, or a "suicide" position, with the operative tip directed generally toward the user's body.